



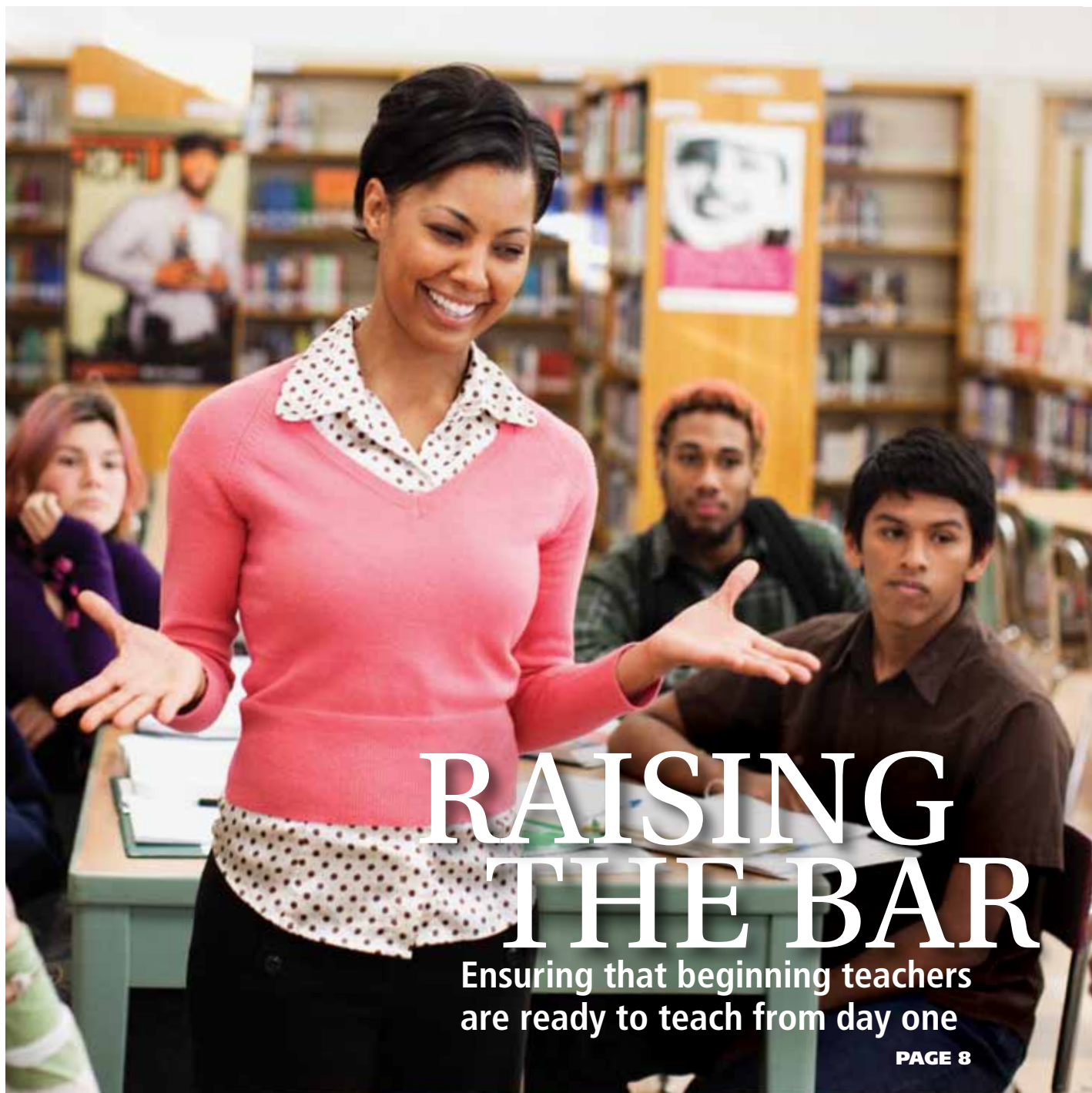
A Union of Professionals

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On Campus

THE NATIONAL PUBLICATION OF AFT HIGHER EDUCATION FACULTY AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF

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RAISING THE BAR

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Raising the threshold for teachers and their preparation programs

RANDI WEINGARTEN, AFT President

MOST RESPECTED PROFESSIONS, such as law, medicine, engineering and accounting, have seen a need to include formal training and establish a high standard—a bar—for entry into their ranks. Teachers should be no exception. We should set and enforce our own entry standards, just as those professions do.

To help teachers and teacher educators meet this challenge, the AFT's Teacher Preparation Task Force has developed a proposal that could mark an unprecedented leap in elevating the quality of the teaching profession. This issue of *AFT On Campus* lays out the details (see page 8).

Our proposal is about raising the overall quality of teacher preparation, not just about giving another test. As we're raising the standards for students through the Common Core State Standards, we should do the same for teachers.

The tests that states now give prospective teachers for certification and licensure vary enormously. Too often, those tests are not rigorous enough, and more often, new teachers tell us they are not relevant to being prepared to enter the classroom.

An April 2012 Hart Research Associates survey of 500 new K-12 public school teachers found that one in three reported feeling unprepared on their first day, especially in the areas of classroom discipline, time management and lesson preparation. Teachers said the top problem in their training program was that it failed to prepare them for the challenges of teaching in the "real world."

As part of the overall effort to raise the quality of teacher preparation, we are proposing a rigorous, universal assessment. It should

include a demonstration of practical teaching ability as well as a rigorous exam of subject and pedagogical knowledge. Fundamentally, that assessment should be connected to a program offering an in-depth and integrated clinical experience that enables new teachers to take full responsibility when they enter their own classrooms.

The universal threshold we're proposing would replace the hodgepodge of state licensure tests that now exists. This threshold would be for all teachers no matter where they work or how they enter the field—through the traditional route or through alternative routes.

We do not suggest that all teacher preparation programs and certification processes should be identical or standardized. We need flexibility and diversity within our schools of education, because programs are designed to train teachers from different backgrounds and experiences for different settings, challenges and opportunities. Also, it is important to note that neither better alignment of the teacher preparation process nor a universal threshold for beginning teachers precludes programs from being tailored to meet the particular needs of a community or state.

This is what Finland did as a first step to upgrading its teaching profession and transitioning to a high-status, well-paid profession. In fact, every leading country, especially those whose students are outperforming ours, supports teacher candidates from the moment they enter their teacher training program.

The United States needs to do the same. Practicing teachers in K-12 and higher education should own responsibility for setting and

enforcing the teaching profession's standards. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards could lead in establishing common professional standards, aligning teacher preparation with those standards, and ensuring that candidates meet them.

We know most teachers are incredibly dedicated, talented professionals. But because the quality of pre-service teacher preparation and alternative certification programs varies so widely, many new teachers are learning things on the job that they should know before they are in charge of a classroom.

Kids only get one chance at their education. As always, we want to make sure we're making the most of it.

Tragedy and courage in Newtown

AT PRESS TIME, word came of the killing of 26 people at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn. "The entire AFT community is shaken to its core by this massacre of young children and the school employees who care for and nurture them," AFT president Randi Weingarten said on Dec. 14. There were extraordinary acts of courage by school employees to lock down the building and protect children.

AFT officers, with AFT Connecticut, have reached out to our affiliates there—the Newtown Federation of Education Personnel, Newtown Federation of Teachers, and Newtown Federation of Custodians and Maintenance—pledging to do everything possible to support our teachers and staff, and the community grappling with this tragedy. In the days and months ahead we will share (at www.aft.org) how those in the AFT community can extend the circle of support.



RANDI WEINGARTEN
President
LORRETTA JOHNSON
Secretary-Treasurer
FRANCINE LAWRENCE
Executive Vice President

KRIS HAVENS
Communications Director

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Production Staff

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Murky MOOCs

Massive open online courses' credit-worthiness to be assessed by education group

IN THE HIGHER ED BLOGOSPHERE, there is a debate under way about massive open online courses: Are MOOCs a meteor that will transform higher education in ways distance education has not?

In November, the American Council on Education announced a wide-ranging research and evaluation initiative to examine the academic potential of MOOCs. Among the questions ACE and the funder, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, want to answer is: Can these courses—and the students who take them—be assessed for credit?

For decades, ACE's College Credit Recommendation Service has been in the business of assessing learning done outside accredited institutions for college credit. These outside learning sites include workplaces and the military.

Now, ACE is partnering with the organizations Coursera, founded in 2011 by Stanford

professors Daphne Koller and Andrew Ng, and the University Professional and Continuing Education Association. Coursera works with more than 30 colleges and universities nationwide to offer noncredit-bearing online courses at no cost to outside students. As Coursera has taken off, other universities have formed partnerships and rushed to offer MOOCs of their own.

Faculty are not universally thrilled. At San Diego City College, for example, the Academic Senate passed a resolution calling MOOCs “a radical change in our pedagogy” and demanding a primary role for faculty in determining the use of MOOCs districtwide.

“It's pretty clear that this is an open door to a kind of teacherless classroom,” says SDCC English professor Jim Miller, a member of the AFT Guild.



KENNETH MCMILLAN

- The agenda for the ACE project includes:
- Exploring new academic and financial models inspired by “the disruptive potential of MOOCs.”
 - Evaluating select Coursera courses for college credit.
 - Examining effective approaches, pedagogies and practices that lead to student success, as well as the applicability of college credit recommendations for MOOCs to college degree completion programs.

The advent of MOOCs has raised many questions about cost, access and quality in higher education. Through shared governance or curriculum committees, says Miller, faculty must be part of finding the answers.

Good news on college completion

A longer view of the data shows better results overall

A NEW REPORT on college completion shows better performance by U.S. colleges and universities in getting students through to graduation than the public has been led to believe—especially by those wielding the carrot and stick of accountability.

The study, “Completing College: A National View of Student Attainment Rates,” shows a dramatic increase in the U.S. college completion rate when nontraditional student pathways are included in the data pool. Within 12 years, 12 percent of the first-time students completed a degree or certificate at an institution other than the one where they started, raising the overall completion rate from 42 percent to 54 percent. More than 75 percent of full-time students complete college within six years.

The report is produced by the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, which used “student-level” data—as opposed to institution-specific data—made available by 3,300 participating colleges and universities, public and private, nonprofit and for-profit. The center looked at the six-year outcomes of



KENNETH MCMILLAN

a cohort of first-time-in-college, degree-seeking students who started in fall 2006. This study is different from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), for example, which depends on graduation rate data from institutions tracking their student retention performance, not students' persistence to degree.

The center notes that students pursuing postsecondary education today follow in-

creasingly complex pathways. “Nontraditional students, like those who postpone college enrollment after high school, attend college part time and/or have full-time jobs, have become the new majority among U.S. college students.” The old way of collecting data fails to fully capture these students and also fails to recognize institutional and policy efforts to support them, a view the AFT has long held.

In addition to the higher completion rate, the report found:

- More than 1 in 5 students who completed a degree did so at an institution other than the one where they started.
- Out of the full starting cohort, 3.5 percent received a degree within six years in a state different from where they started.
- Overall, 15 percent of two-year-college starters completed a degree at a four-year institution within six years, and nearly two-thirds of those did so without first obtaining a two-year degree.
- Gains from completions elsewhere were greater for traditional-age students (age 24 or younger at first entry) than for older students (age over 24 at first entry).
- Older students who enrolled exclusively part time actually had a higher completion rate than traditional-age part-time students.



Is it safe to assume you may live-tweet at academic presentations?


YES

Live-tweeting engages nontraditional audiences

BY ALEX HANNA

LIVE-TWEETING IS THE FUTURE of scholarly engagement. New media allows us to present our research to people who can't attend academic presentations, either because they can't attend the venue, are not part of the particular research community, or are not part of academia at all. In higher education, where funding for research is already subject to conservative attack, it seems counterproductive to restrict when, where and how we disseminate the fruits of our research.

In the social sciences, researchers usually use conferences to present work in progress. Exposing work at this stage to broader audiences allows more voices to inform where the research could go. In the hard sciences, conferences are often the chief publication venue for groundbreaking work. Linking this work to Twitter allows scholars to engage, to question the author on theory and methods, and to generate scholarly and popular buzz around that work.

There are, of course, places in which this can be inappropriate. A dissertation workshop and a lab group meeting are not places to broadcast ideas still in formation. But ongoing or completed work that strangers are already seeing presents an opportunity to engage a wider audience and seek feedback.

Take my own experience with live-tweeting: At the last meeting of the American Sociological Association, Twitter not only reached a community of scholars who were co-present at the conference in Denver but also reached those who couldn't attend the conference. I participated remotely at another conference where organizers made an effort to engage with those on Twitter, assigning each panel a "backchannel moderator" who could read the stream of tweets surrounding the panel and field questions that he or she asked presenters.

As new media technologies keep evolving, we will be able to have our research reach new audiences. We should embrace this new reality.

Alex Hanna is a Ph.D. student in sociology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a member of the Teaching Assistants' Association.


NO

Conferences are not strictly 'public' spaces

BY ADELINE KOH

LIVE-TWEETING AT ACADEMIC CONFERENCES is a double-edged sword. Many feel that one's professional visibility may be increased by people live-tweeting your work. But a substantial part of the academic population is wary of live-tweeting, being concerned that conference papers or closed workshops are not strictly "public," but rather, closed venues for ideas that are not fully ready for such a large audience. These people feel there is a distinct difference between a completely "open" space such as Twitter, and more limited spaces such as conferences—which often charge people to take part and attend workshops and panels.

Additionally, others worry about their ideas being misrepresented by live-tweeters. Some people fear that live-tweeting may lead to intellectual property theft. Erin Templeton, a *Chronicle of Higher Education* columnist, has argued that automatically live-tweeting someone's talk might presuppose the speaker's consent, and that if a speaker were genuinely interested in being live-tweeted, she would be capable of live-tweeting a talk by herself. Accordingly, Templeton has warned that automatically live-tweeting without permission may cross professional boundaries.

However, champions of live-tweeting have countered that there is little difference between someone live-tweeting a talk, and someone writing down notes and e-mailing them to colleagues after the event. Social media commentator Roopika Risam has pointed out that much of the debate over live-tweeting centers around the issues of control and access, particularly around "who controls conference space, presentation content, or access to knowledge."

All in all, I would advise that if you are at a conference and would like to live-tweet, you should try your best to secure permissions beforehand from the presenters. This may not always be possible, but people are usually grateful you asked and are generally excited by the prospect of their work reaching a larger audience. Simply put, asking in advance will put your mind at ease.

Adeline Koh is a visiting faculty fellow in the humanities at Duke University. In the fall, she returns to Richard Stockton College (N.J.), where she is an assistant professor of literature and a member of the Stockton Federation of College Teachers.



WEIGH IN! We want to hear your thoughts on the current "Speak Out" question. Go to www.aft.org/speakout.

In the last issue of *AFT On Campus*, our "Speak Out" question was:

As a matter of practice, should internal faculty be represented on boards of trustees?

ONLINE POLL RESULTS

80%

YES

20%

NO



ROBERT G. PORTER
Scholars Program

Applications for the 2013 Robert G. Porter Scholars Program are available online. AFT members and their children are eligible to participate in the program, which awards four \$8,000 scholarships to graduating high school seniors who are dependents of AFT members and \$1,000 grants to AFT members who are continuing their education.

To apply:

- Download the application from the AFT website at <http://go.aft.org/scholarships>; or
- E-mail an application request to porterscholars@aft.org.

Application deadline is March 31, 2013.

Michigan Republicans ram through right to work

An act of 'contempt for middle-class families'

MICHIGAN GOV. Rick Snyder, who, in his two years in office, had maintained that he would not support so-called right-to-work legislation because it is too divisive, did an abrupt about-face in December. As the clock ticked down on a lame-duck Legislature, he signaled that he had changed his mind. Republican legislators rammed two anti-worker measures—one for the public sector and one for the private—through both chambers. With a stroke of the pen on Dec. 11, Snyder made Michigan—the cradle of the American labor movement—the 24th right-to-work state in the nation.

The legislation takes away workers' rights while doing nothing to create jobs. In reality, the record from right-to-work laws in other states is one of lower wages, fewer benefits and more dangerous workplaces.

The devastating actions of the elected officials, many of whom won't even be in office come January, "demonstrated their contempt not only for Michigan's middle-class families, but also for democracy itself," said AFT presi-

dent Randi Weingarten.

President Obama, who was at the Daimler Detroit Diesel Plant on Dec. 10, said that right-to-work laws are a "race to the bottom." They are "giving you the right to work for less money," he said. "What we shouldn't be doing is trying to take away your rights to bargain for better wages or working conditions."

Hundreds of AFT members, including educators from the Lecturers' Employee Organization and the Graduate Employees' Organization (University of Michigan), the Graduate Employees Union (Michigan State), and the Henry Ford Community College Federation of Teachers, were among the more than 15,000 workers, labor leaders, clergy, activists and other allies who gathered outside the Lansing Capitol on Dec. 11 to protest.

"The actions of Gov. Rick Snyder and his lame-duck Legislature have torn Michigan apart," said AFT Michigan president David Hecker, an AFT vice president. "The thousands of men and women who gathered in Lansing



Labor friends protested in Lansing on Dec. 11.

today began the process of putting it back together. Today was the first step in the long road to take our state back."

"Gov. Snyder's own flip-flop on this issue reveals the lengths to which he is willing to go to deliver for the Koch brothers, [Amway heir] Dick DeVos, ALEC [the American Legislative Exchange Council], CEOs and other extremists waging a war on working people—all while ignoring the will of Michigan citizens and the needs of Michigan families," said Weingarten. She applauded the six Republican House members and four Republican senators who joined with Democratic legislators to oppose the law.

Grad employees win tuition waivers—again

In Illinois, contract averts strike and preserves national model

THE GRADUATE EMPLOYEES' Organization at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign has ratified a five-year contract with the university running from Aug. 16, 2012, to Aug. 15, 2017. The GEO is affiliated with the Illinois Federation of Teachers and the AFT, and represents 2,400 teaching and graduate assistants.

For the second time in three years, as the fall semester was in high gear, the graduate employees found themselves staring down a strike over a bedrock issue for all graduate employ-

ees—tuition waiver protection. The university has been trying to erode the benefit since the GEO held a successful two-day strike in 2009 and secured the language in the contract.

"Tuition waivers are a fundamental part of graduate education at every major university," says GEO spokeswoman Stephanie Seawell. "Waivers are how universities, like the University of Illinois, are able to hire and compete for high-quality and diverse graduate students."

In 2010, the university arbitrarily reduced the waiver benefit to cover just the in-state value of the tuition for some TAs in the College of Fine and Applied Arts. The union filed a grievance, and in 2011, an arbitrator found that the university had unilaterally violated the contract. The university appealed, and on Nov. 15, 2012, the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board unanimously upheld that decision and ordered that the teaching assistants be reimbursed for the difference, with interest.

"The labor board decision had an impact," says Natalie Uhl, a fifth-year doctoral student in anthropology and a member of the GEO bargaining team. Other cards that strengthened the union's hand: a strike authorization

vote, a skilled mediator, and an "active, energetic membership" that held teach-ins and work-ins and attended bargaining sessions.

"Our sense about the waivers," says Uhl, "was that the administration was trying something: Could they switch to a more private, corporate model at a Big Ten, land-grant research institution? If they had been successful, a lot of places might have followed suit."

Across the country, graduate employees were "very mindful" of what was happening at Illinois, says Samantha Montgomery, solidarity and political action chair of the Graduate Employees' Organization at the University of Michigan. "We didn't want to see that coming our way."

"Collective bargaining really was the thing that gave us the power to protect our tuition waivers," adds Uhl. "If we hadn't been organized, with the IFT and AFT behind us, we would have been powerless."

The GEO was also able to secure increases to the minimum stipends and to what the employer would pay for health insurance premiums. In a side letter, the university agreed to comply with the IELRB order.

GEO members fought energetically for their contract, holding teach-ins, work-ins and rallies.



DAVID CONERFORD



Downsizing adjuncts' workload

Colleges jump the gun on Affordable Care Act and definition of 'full-time' work



THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT will open the door for millions of American workers and their families to gain access to affordable health insurance beginning in 2014. But some college administrations are panicking at the thought that their poorly compensated adjuncts might be among them.

On Nov. 29, Kate Henderson, an adjunct professor in the Department of Physical Education, Recreation and Health at New Jersey's Kean University, got a terse e-mail from her employer informing her that she would not be teaching her usual three courses next semester. One of her fully enrolled courses would be assigned to a new hire.

Henderson soon learned that 210 of her 1,200 adjunct colleagues had received similar notifications, with apologies "for the inconvenience." The university is cutting the adjuncts' maximum load from three three-credit courses per semester (fall and spring) to two.

Although the administration says the policy change is a matter of managerial prerogative, Henderson, president of the Kean University Adjunct Faculty Federation, believes the change is a misguided reaction to measures in the Affordable Care Act.

Starting in 2014, the Affordable Care Act levies penalties against large employers (with more than 50 full-time equivalent workers) who do not offer affordable insurance coverage to their full-time employees. The act defines a "full-time" employee as one who is

employed on average at least 30 hours per week. The penalties apply when a full-time employee receives a subsidy to buy insurance in a state's exchange.

The Community College of Allegheny County (Pa.) notified its faculty and staff in mid-November that it would cut the workloads of some 400 employees in order to "comply with the new legislation's conception of part-time employment." The college is worried that it might be hit with \$6 million in penalties in 2014.

Youngstown State University in Ohio also recently announced similar defensive actions, with a twist: Any adjunct whose load goes over 29 hours will be fired.

Colleges are being hasty

The AFT has been carefully tracking the Affordable Care Act since its inception, and has submitted comments to the U.S. Treasury Department on the 30-hour rule in particular.

"Federal regulators have not yet issued rules on how full-time status will be determined for contingent faculty," says Amy Clary of the AFT research and strategic initiatives department. AFT national staff met recently with federal regulators to discuss this issue as part of an AFL-CIO-led coalition of unions. The AFT recommended that 12 credit hours per semester be regarded as the equivalent of full time for the purpose of the employer penalty, but the federal regulators have not yet

issued a decision on the matter.

"Because the federal government has not yet defined full-time status for contingent faculty, any employer who cuts contingent faculty workload is doing so pre-emptively, without the benefit of complete information," says Clary.

On Jan. 22 and again Jan. 23, the AFT will sponsor a one-hour webinar to answer questions about contingent faculty and health-care. (See below for information.)

"Institutions like CCAC don't know what to do, so they're acting on advice of consultants, trying to plan for the worst," says John Dziak, president of AFT Local 2067, which represents the full-time faculty at the Community College of Allegheny County.

"As we see it, the act isn't the problem," says Craig Smith, AFT Higher Education director. "It's institutions finding ways to deny deserving employees potential benefits. This is just another example of bad employer behavior."

Very few adjuncts around the country have health benefits from their employer, so the Affordable Care Act will help them, says Clary. "Adjuncts are so poorly paid that they would almost certainly qualify for subsidies on the exchange that would make coverage—even family coverage—affordable."

For now, the affected Kean adjuncts will be filing for unemployment benefits due to a workload reduction, says Henderson. "And, the university will advertise for hundreds of new adjuncts they will have to process, hire and train for the spring semester. It makes no sense," she complains.

Webinar

The Affordable Care Act and implications for contingent faculty Jan. 22 and 23

The AFT will host a 60-minute webinar to address the 2014 healthcare exchanges and the penalties that may be levied on employers who do not insure their full-time employees. We will also discuss the law's definition of full-time employee and answer questions.

Join us on either Tuesday, Jan. 22, at 2 p.m. or Wednesday, Jan. 23, at 4 p.m. (EST). The same content will be repeated in each session.

To register, go to <http://tinyurl.com/cv9hpn8>.



MILLER PHOTOGRAPHY

Answering the call

Superstorm Sandy highlights the essential role of AFT members and other public employees

AFT MEMBERS along the Eastern Seaboard felt the impact of Superstorm Sandy, both professionally and personally. Preparing for the Oct. 29 storm and dealing with its aftermath—an ongoing challenge—highlighted the essential services provided by healthcare professionals, educators, college public safety officers and other state workers. They stepped up to help with the rescue and relief activities, often mounting heroic efforts in the face of difficult circumstances.

For example, 10 campuses of the City University of New York served as evacuation centers, according to the *Clarion*, the newspaper of the Professional Staff Congress. The biggest center was at York College, which housed 1,000 Sandy refugees for nearly a week. York's public safety officers—PSC members—worked alongside FEMA and city workers to keep the peace, assist with the flow of supplies, and ensure a clean and safe environment for people reeling from shocking losses. Families from the hard-hit Rockaways and the burned-

out Breezy Point homes in Queens, N.Y., found refuge there.

York College assistant professor Eric Metcalf camped out in his office with his wife and a friend, commuting to the Rockaways for 12-hour days of pumping water out of building basements, demolishing water-damaged portions to ward off mold, and rebuilding. "This is like something out of a nightmare," Metcalf told the *Clarion* two weeks after the storm. "You cannot imagine how bad it is."

The *Clarion* reports that at least 12 PSC members lost their homes. Some members of the CUNY family lost their lives.

Occupy Sandy

Elsewhere in the city, veterans of the Occupy Wall Street movement quickly morphed into Occupy Sandy, a shelter, food and relief offshoot, according to a Nov. 1 report posted on the *Huffington Post*. Two days after the hurricane, when FEMA had yet to appear, volunteers in the hard-hit Brooklyn neighborhood of Red Hook were organizing to get food, clothing and other necessities to the elderly and others marooned in high-rise apartment buildings that lacked electricity. "We've been walking up and down stairs, providing care packages of food, and flashlights and bottled water," said Conor Tomás Reed, a member of the Professional Staff Congress who is a doctoral student at the City University of New York and a professor at Baruch College.

"Occupy has gone from general protest work to now direct community support," Reed told the *Huffington Post*.

The AFT's healthcare workers also did heroic duty. An article in



MILLER PHOTOGRAPHY



AFT AND UFT PHOTOS



the Nov. 1 edition of the *New York Times* chronicled the work of nurses and health professionals represented by the Visiting Nurse Service of New York, an affiliate of the Federation of Nurses/UFT. Allison Chisholm, who works for the VNS, pressed her way through the difficult challenges created by the storm to take care of her patients. "It was treacherous driving during the hurricane. But it's just something you do as a nurse," Chisholm told the *Times*. "That continuity of care helps the healing. I don't see this as being heroic. I have a conscience. I need to get to sleep at night."

As the weeks passed, hundreds of United Federation of Teachers members volunteered repeatedly to help their union brothers and sisters as well as their neighbors recover. They helped with rebuilding, distributing food and supplies, and getting students back to school and life back to normal (see sidebar).

New Jersey reels

Superstorm Sandy aimed its greatest wrath on the Jersey Shore, where the AFT-affiliated

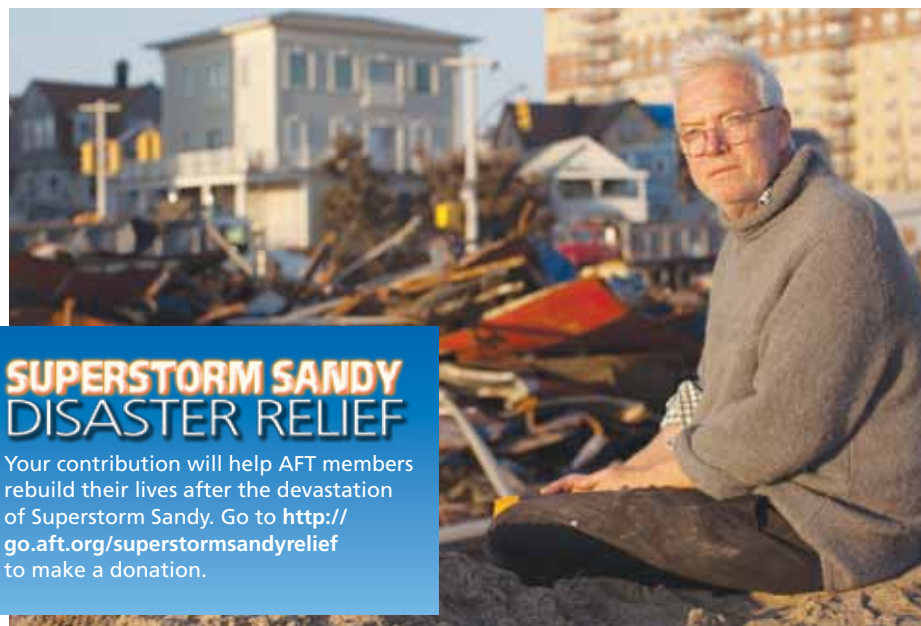
members of the University of Connecticut Professional Employees Association were prepared, reports UCPEA member Chuck Morrell, the university's associate director for operations. He says that during a natural disaster emergency such as this one, the Student Union serves as a gathering place for the campus, providing not only the food court options but also charging stations for cell phones, laptops and other electronic devices.

The key is advance planning, Morrell says. "It always will come back to planning and the preparations that are made in advance of the weather event."

The union family steps up

Across the country, AFT members have responded generously to the multibillion dollar costs of recovery. The national union immediately activated AFT Superstorm Sandy Disaster Relief, which provides several ways of giving (see box). As

Taking a break from the cleanup, York College assistant professor Eric Metcalf surveys the wreckage in his Rockaways neighborhood.



Health Professionals and Allied Employees represents nurses and other health professionals. Many of them worked around the clock to care for patients, in addition to dealing with the impact of the storm on their own lives. Thanks to generators—and the hard work of HPAE members—the hospitals managed to remain operational.

Connecticut also felt Sandy's impact, but

AFT On Campus went to press six weeks after the storm, donors had given more than \$250,000 through the AFT Disaster Relief Fund, raised \$35,000 to buy new books through the AFT's Sandy First Book Fund, and sent more than \$10,000 to the projects identified through Donors Choose—a non-profit that links people who want to support learning with public school teachers.



AFT secretary-treasurer Lorretta Johnson in the Rockaways in Queens, N.Y.

AFT members help with relief effort

HUNDREDS OF AFT members and staff took part in a "Day of Action" on Nov. 10 to help with Superstorm Sandy relief efforts. AFT members from Connecticut, Maryland and Pennsylvania traveled by bus to New York to volunteer with members of the United Federation of Teachers to distribute much-needed supplies, food and clothing to members in affected areas in New York.

Members from AFT Pennsylvania and the Baltimore Teachers Union were at the United Federation of Teachers headquarters in New York City. They stuffed 30,000 backpacks with school supplies and other necessities. The backpacks were given to elementary and secondary school students who had been relocated because of the storm. The UFT also collected coats, hats and gloves donated by AFT Pennsylvania members.

Volunteers from AFT Connecticut and AFT national headquarters in Washington, D.C., were also on hand. They spent the day in the Rockaways and on Coney Island, where they distributed toiletries, water and batteries to members and others in the community. Volunteers also took part in cleaning up beach areas, parks and schoolyards. Members of the New York State United Teachers were on Long Island to help at recovery sites as well.

A group of volunteer members from upstate New York, who had gotten help from the UFT and others when Hurricane Irene hit last year, decided to return the favor. Martin Messner, president of the Schoharie (N.Y.) Teachers Association, who was named an AFT Everyday Hero for his local's efforts to help in the aftermath of Irene, mobilized his members to help rebuild homes on Staten Island.

In addition, the AFT delivered cleaning supplies, gas cans, batteries, blankets and other items to the AFT-affiliated Health Professionals and Allied Employees in New Jersey. The donated items were distributed to locals where members have been hit the hardest.

RAISING THE BAR

How can we ensure that beginning teachers are ready to teach from day one?

ALL FUTURE TEACHERS should be required to meet a universal and rigorous bar that gauges mastery of subject-matter knowledge—much like the bar exam lawyers must take before they can enter the legal profession—and demonstrates competency in how to teach, the American Federation of Teachers says in a report released in December on boosting the standards for teacher preparation.

“Raising the Bar: Aligning and Elevating Teacher Preparation and the Teaching Profession,” issued by the AFT Teacher Preparation Task Force, urges a move toward a systemic approach to preparing teachers and a more rigorous threshold to ensure that every new teacher is ready to teach.

At a time when school systems in 48 states have raised the bar for students through the widespread adoption of the internationally benchmarked Common Core State Standards, says AFT president Randi Weingarten, “we must do the same for teachers.”

“It’s time to do away with a common rite of passage into the teaching profession—whereby newly minted teachers are tossed the keys to their classrooms, expected to figure things out, and left to see if they and their students sink or swim. This is unfair to both students and their teachers, who care so much but who want and need to feel competent and confident to teach from their first day on the job,” she says.

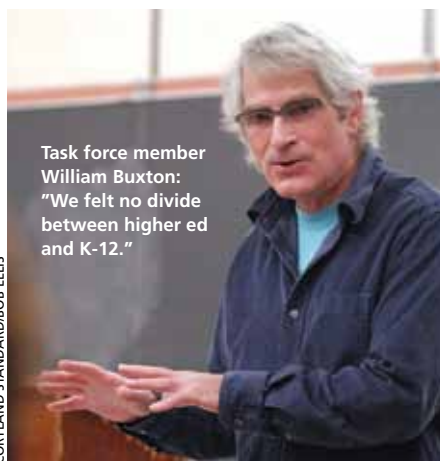
How to improve teacher training

The report lays out three changes the task force recommends to truly improve teacher preparation and, by extension, teaching and learning:

- All stakeholders must collaborate to ensure that teacher preparation standards, programs and assessments are aligned with a well-grounded vision of effective teaching.
- Teaching, like other respected professions, must have a universal assessment process for entry that includes rigorous preparation centered on clinical practice as well as theory, an in-depth test of subject and pedagogical knowledge, and a comprehensive teacher

performance assessment. This assessment would be required of all future teachers, whether they enter the profession through the traditional or an alternative route.

- Primary responsibility for setting and enforcing the standards of the profession, and for ensuring quality and coherence of teacher preparation programs, must reside with the members of the profession—practicing professionals in K-12 and higher education.



CORTLAND STANDARD/BOB ELLIS

Task force member William Buxton: “We felt no divide between higher ed and K-12.”

The work of the task force

The 14-member task force was made up of an even split of K-12 teachers and higher education faculty, from both general disciplines and schools of education. The AFT and other unions are uniquely positioned to bring both worlds together, says William Buxton, an associate professor of literacy education at the State University of New York College at Cortland. He is also chair of the United University Professions’ Teacher Education Committee.

“You typically hear of a divide between higher education and K-12. We didn’t feel that existed. We all had the same concern: How do we ensure we have qualified teachers to go into classrooms and who, once there, get ongoing support to improve?”

The task force met over the course of a year and heard from leading lights in the teacher education and research world, such as Linda Darling-Hammond, who, with colleagues at

Stanford University, has been working on an entry teacher performance assessment called edTPA, which is being piloted in 24 states. It also heard from Jim Cibulka, president of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education; Harvard University professor of education Susan Moore Johnson; and Susan Petroff, a senior director of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education.

The task force commissioned a survey of new teachers, with three years of experience or less, conducted by Peter D. Hart Research Associates in April 2012.

The survey of 500 novice K-12 public school teachers was illuminating, though not surprising, said task force members.

- One in 3 new teachers reported feeling unprepared on their first day. They said the top problem in their training program was a failure to prepare them for the challenges of teaching in the “real world.”
- New teachers were more likely to feel unprepared if they taught large numbers of special needs students or taught in a low-income or low-performing district.
- Teachers who received an alternative certification were more likely to feel unprepared, and they also gave their training low marks.
- Those with a master’s degree and content training in the subject they teach reported feeling more prepared.

A tangle of stakeholders

The task force set out first to identify what works and does not work in the field of teacher preparation, and why. A starting resource was “Building a Profession: Strengthening Teacher Preparation and Induction,” a report of another AFT task force on teacher education that was released in 2000. Its recommendations then—for more rigorous entry and exit standards, clinical training and mastery of content knowledge—are as relevant today, all agreed. But the better alignment it called for never happened.

The 2012 task force took a hard look at the lack of alignment and coherence that results from a broad state-driven, decentralized public education system.



One figure in the report shows the web of stakeholders—teacher education institutions, K-12 schools, teacher accrediting agencies, state education boards, the federal government, education associations and unions—that are responsible for standards, program design, assessment and certification, as well as for program review for teacher preparation. The system in the United States, says the report, “is at best confusing and at worst a fragmented and bureaucratic tangle of stakeholder groups with varied, sometimes overlapping, responsibilities and blurry accountability lines.”

“That graphic for me captured what I have felt for a number of years, a dysfunction in the organization of teacher preparation,” says Buxton. “It’s a fiction to say all are on the same page, unified in their goals and in what they are trying to accomplish.”

AFT executive vice president Francine Lawrence was chair of the AFT Teacher Preparation Task Force. When she was president of the Toledo (Ohio) Federation of Teachers, she put the district on the map by negotiating contract provisions that defined expectations for teachers’ subject-matter knowledge and skills, and provided for high-quality, teacher-driven professional development. “The time is long over-

due for the United States to commit to a consistent approach that will lift the teaching profession by making the training and preparation of our educators more effective, efficient and rigorous,” she says.

One strength of the report, says Derryn Moten, an Alabama State University professor, co-chair of the Faculty-Staff Alliance there and a task force member, is its call for program admission requirements that are rigorous, but also flexible enough to include multiple mech-

oversee establishing a widely agreed-upon set of standards, coherent programs and a common set of rigorous assessments. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards has already established the standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do.

“The time is right for moving teaching into the ranks of the premier professions, such as law and medicine,” says NBPTS president and CEO Ronald Thorpe. “The AFT has laid out a

“The time is long overdue for the United States to commit to a consistent approach that will **lift the teaching profession** by making the training and preparation of our educators more effective, efficient and rigorous.”

—FRANCINE LAWRENCE, AFT executive vice president

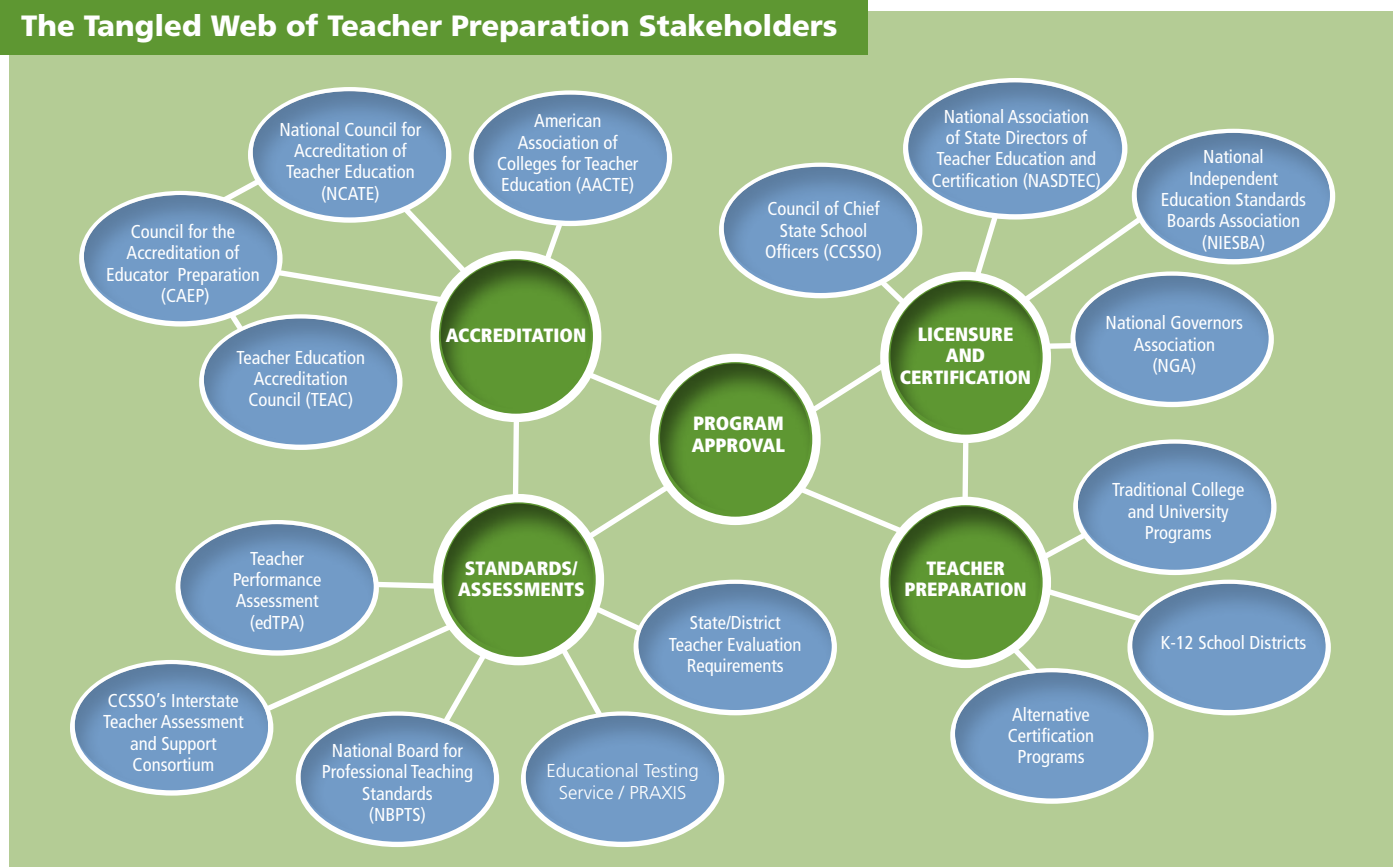
anisms for assessing potential teacher candidates: “The report says, students with the commitment and demonstrated potential to be good teachers should have the opportunity and the support needed to pursue their dream, regardless of prior disadvantage or discrimination,” he points out.

The task force identifies a logical entity to

wise and bold vision for transforming the profession, and we are pleased to help ensure a coherent career trajectory that builds on professional knowledge and skills from pre-service through board certification and teacher leadership roles.”

The report now goes to the AFT executive council for approval at its February meeting.

The Tangled Web of Teacher Preparation Stakeholders





The AFT's Election 2012 bus tour received a rousing welcome in Ohio.

BOB PERKOSKI

A vote for shared responsibility

Unions conducted massive get-out-the-vote campaign as polls showed that members solidly backed the Obama-Biden ticket

IN 2011, THE CLOUT of the labor movement was on full display when it led the fight to repeal a bill that would gut collective bargaining for public employees in Ohio. The strength of organized labor was reaffirmed this year on Nov. 6, when its ground game was pivotal to President Barack Obama's victory in the Midwestern battleground state and elsewhere in the country.



AFT/GETTY IMAGES

The re-election of Obama and Vice President Joe Biden was a declaration by the American people that to rebuild a strong and vibrant middle class and ensure a voice for all, we must be in this together, AFT president Randi Weingarten says. "The importance of this election was far greater than casting a ballot for one candidate over another—as important as that exercise in democracy is," she notes. "The American people voted to create opportunity and shared prosperity by sharing responsibility, and to reject the cynical 'you're on your own' philosophy."

Throughout the country, unions were instrumental in educating members about the issues and getting voters to the polls in support of Obama and other union-en-

dorsed candidates. "Thousands upon thousands of AFT members made phone calls, knocked on doors, and reached out in every way they could to get their families, friends and neighbors to the polls on Election Day—an effort that contributed not only to President Obama's re-election, but also to victories in key Senate, House and gubernatorial races," Weingarten adds.

AFT bus tour builds excitement

Weingarten, AFT secretary-treasurer Loretta Johnson and AFT executive vice president Francine Lawrence participated in these get-out-the-vote activities during the AFT's "Your Vote—Your Right—Their Futures" bus tour, which took them to Florida, New York, Ohio and several other states.



This election comes down to “money power versus people power,” Weingarten told members of the Volusia Teachers Organization in Daytona Beach, Fla. “They have a lot of money and ads. We have the people.”

In California, election activities provided avenues for forging new strategic alliances between labor and grass-roots community organizations, says Alisa Messer, president of Local 2121 at City College of San Francisco. Facing huge budget problems, the 90,000-student community college desperately needed to see passage of Proposition A, which would send millions the college’s way over the next few years. Statewide, progressive groups also worked for passage of Proposition 30 (see box below).

Local 2121 partnered with the Chinese Progressive Association Action Fund and Chinese for Affirmative Action in a Chinese-language, paid phone-bank program to reach out to nearly 9,000 Chinese voters. In

addition to calling, the groups held political education workshops and “beautifully integrated with AFT 2121 on CCSF’s Chinatown campus,” says Messer. It lays the groundwork for ongoing work on behalf of the college and poor and working-class communities in San Francisco.

The AFL-CIO reports that its labor election program made more than 80 million phone calls to union members and working-class households, knocked on more than 14 million doors, had conversations with more than 3 million workers at their job sites and sent more than 75 million pieces of mail.

A national election night survey conducted by Peter D. Hart Research Associates showed that union members voted for Obama over Mitt Romney by 65 percent to 33 percent. The labor movement was especially important in battleground states like Nevada, Ohio and Wisconsin—where union members voted for Obama over Romney 70

percent to 29 percent. The work of AFT members and other unionists was critical in these and other battleground states such as Colorado, Florida, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania and Virginia, all of which were won by President Obama.



CFT PHOTO

Students set up tables at City College of San Francisco to help get the vote out among the Asian-American student population.

PRO-WORKER CANDIDATES ELECTED

Voters in several states back investment in schools and public services

IN RACES ACROSS THE COUNTRY, from electing a pro-working-family majority in the U.S. Senate and pro-worker governors to passing the Dream Act in Maryland, Americans went to the polls in November and voted decisively for shared responsibility and a fair shot at success.

There were several notable Senate victories, including the race in Massachusetts where **Elizabeth Warren** bested incumbent Scott Brown; in Montana, where the MEA-MFT-endorsed **Jon Tester** won re-election; and in Ohio, where **Sherrod Brown**, an outspoken advocate for working men and women, easily won re-election.

“Because of union members’ efforts over the past two years in places like Ohio and Wisconsin to fight against attacks on working people, voters sided with the candidates who understand that good jobs—jobs that enable a middle-class life, many of which are unionized—are key to rebuilding our economy,” AFT president Randi Weingarten says.

In several states, including California and Ohio, voters took a stand to say that investing in public schools and public services is a critical priority. California voters backed an initiative that is expected to increase state revenue by as much as \$9 billion. Supported by the California Federation of Teachers and Gov. Jerry Brown, **Proposition 30** increases taxes on those making more than \$250,000 a year and modestly increases the state sales tax.



MARILYN HUMPHRIES

“The decisive victory of Prop 30 reveals an important shift in California’s orientation,” says CFT president and AFT vice president Joshua Pechthalt. “For more than 30 years, it has been common wisdom that ‘Californians don’t like taxes.’ No longer. Proposition 30 shows voters once more understand what Oliver Wendell Holmes said a century ago: ‘Taxes are the price we pay for a civilized society.’ Prop 30 is a sign we can create a fair tax system to accomplish California’s priorities.”

California voters also rejected **Proposition 32**, a measure designed to silence the voices of working people. “The members of the CFT worked hard alongside our sisters and brothers in other unions to reveal the hidden agenda of Prop 32 and to defeat it. Fair-minded individuals and institutions from all corners of California recognized the threat 32 posed to the ability of workers to participate in the political process,” Pechthalt says.

In Michigan, voters rejected **Proposition 1**, denying the governor the right to appoint emergency managers who can cancel contracts and abrogate constitutionally guaranteed rights.

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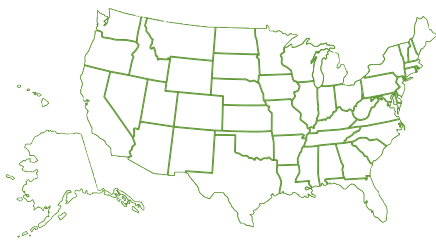


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FL The AFT and its United Teachers of Dade (Fla.) affiliate are working together with members of the Miami community, including the Overtown Youth Center and the Miami-Dade County Public Schools, to partner with Hollywood filmmaker Robert Townsend and NBA Hall of Famer Isiah Thomas in a film production designed to engage young adults and teach them the art of filmmaking.

The upcoming film “Playin’ for Love” is part of a community film initiative that includes a movie production and student training program in which Hollywood artists will teach and mentor young people in Miami’s historic Overtown neighborhood. Local youth will appear as actors in the movie and be trained in all aspects of making a small independent film, including editing, directing, sound design and wardrobe. UTD president Karen Aronowitz, who is an AFT vice president, notes that the project “is really an extension of the work our members do every single day on behalf of the children and young adults in our community.”

“This project was created to give young people something to say ‘yes’ to,” says Thomas. “This is not just using the arts and sports to engage young people; it’s using both to give them an opportunity to grow and learn.”

MO In the interest of cultivating informed consumers, the Ozarks Technical Community College is running a one-of-a-kind, 30-second ad on local television stations. It presents the dramatic difference in cost and credit value of attending its public community college as compared with any of the for-profits in the area, whose costs can be as much as 10 times higher and whose credits the state university often does not accept.

The OTC chancellor told the Springfield, Mo., *News-Leader* one reason for the ads: Students are assuming staggering debt at for-profits but still need to complete credits



CITY OF MIAMI/UTD PHOTO

Hollywood meets Overtown: The UTD in Miami collaborated to turn commercial filmmaking into a learning and mentoring experience for local youth.

that can transfer, yet many have already spent the maximum federal grants and loans they can qualify for.

NJ Montclair State University students were truly offended to see their faces show up in a pre-election Republican political mailer sent around at the end of October. MSU opened a new 2,000-bed dormitory in Little Falls last year. After a voter registration drive, 2,400 new college-aged town residents registered to vote. The GOP mailer warned recipients that students from Democratic Party-supported clubs like Femvolution and the Latin American Student Organization would be voting in “our town,” and the mailer featured photos from MSU literature showing the diversity of the student body—i.e., lots of women and people of color.

The mailer, notes Arnold Korotkin, a member of the MSU Federation of Adjunct Faculty and a Little Falls resident, “conveyed a subliminal message that certain racial and ethnic groups were not welcome in Little Falls.” When the votes were counted, Dems won the White House and Republicans won the local seats. Hardly a revolution.

NY The New York State Public Employment Relations Board has certified a unit of 380 adjunct faculty at Mohawk Valley Community College for collective bargaining. The new local is affiliated with the New York State United Teachers, which already represents the MVCC Professional Association—the union representing the more than 200 full-time faculty at the college. The adjuncts and professional part-time employees formed the union to make their voices heard on numerous issues, says NYSUT, including: job security, opportunities for professional development and advancement, wages, and the opportunity to teach additional courses and work more hours.

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Correcting course

Economics professor helps inmates re-enter society and rebuild their lives

IN THE WORLD, America has the highest percentage of its population incarcerated but is only sixth among developed countries when it comes to college degree attainment. And New Jersey has among the worst ratios of corrections-to-higher ed spending in the United States: It spends almost twice as much on prisons as it does on colleges and universities.

Nancy Wolff does not cite any of these statistics when she talks about her work with the women of the Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women in Clinton, N.J. She talks about people.

She is an economist, a professor and the director of the Center for Behavioral Health Services & Criminal Justice Research at Rutgers University. Her curriculum vitae shows the prolific work of a prodigious scholar, but she doesn't talk about that either.

She talks, instead, about programs she has developed that encourage female prison inmates to focus on healing their minds and bodies as they prepare to re-enter society and live productive lives. While her research agenda has her at the prison four days a week this year, she spends another two days volunteering there as well.

Wolff, who is a member of the Rutgers Council of AAUP Chapters (AAUP-AFT), views this work as a reciprocal process. She does research on offenders to learn what helps people deeply troubled by their pasts, mental illness and the deeds they have done. Then she asks them, "What do you need?" Their answers have resulted in the creation of programs and resources used by hundreds of inmates:

- **Books Behind Bars** encourages reading and discussion in a book club format. Wolff uses her own funds to pay for all the books. Recently, she liquidated her home and used the proceeds from the sale of her artwork and possessions to buy more books.

- **Community 101**, a skills-based, practice-focused program, prepares inmates for successful community living.

- **In-prison Community Centers** are peer-operated centers that have computers and printers for resume and letter writing, and other resources. More than 200 women use the cen-

ters each month.

- **The Bridge** newsletter, edited by Wolff, focuses on re-entry issues for people getting themselves ready to return to society.

- **Pounds Off Program** is a weight loss, exercise and body image program found by Wolff in 2010. This program addresses the obesity problem among incarcerated women and correlated difficulties with low self-esteem.

"When you get people to stop all the negative self-talk, to feel supported, to see what their strengths are—when you build off that perspective—you can see people flourish," says Wolff. "I am a very fortunate woman in that I get to do what inspires me and gives me passion."

Rutgers economist Nancy Wolff learns from the inmates she works with and gives them hope for re-entry.



BRUCE GILBERT

MAILBOX



Online does not replicate face-to-face education

The "Faster, Cheaper, Better" essay (*AFT On Campus*, Nov./Dec. 2012, Technology Page) is a cogent and accurate response to some unrealistic and naive expectations for online technology as well as the funding problems in higher education.

—ANTHONY R. NAPOLI
Wading River, N.Y.

I share Eaton's position on U.S. education: that state money, supplemented by federal funds, has shown a good track record in getting the U.S. population both more educated and more productive, steadily since 1945. After WWII, it became very clear that education is a public good, an investment in the present and future well-being for all

Americans. Now we will not have the same dynamic, because of two errors we are making. We ought not to be (1) placing the burden of cost ever more on the indebted shoulders of students, while (2) delivering to them substandard products online.

The argument that online education is some kind of "solution" to the rising costs of education takes no account of what economists call "externalities," those tradeoffs that dwarf any savings that come from paying less for teachers per classroom and for the classrooms themselves. The tradeoff is in the dynamics of what educators do in those classrooms, face to face, which cannot be replicated by online methods. (My college is trying to do that, and it is not working. Kamenetz is mistaken.) The economic outcomes (not to speak of psychological outcomes) are already among us with less reflection and less independent



thinking, in a nation founded on independent thought and the duty of transmitting that principle first and foremost to those in our schools.

—MARGARET VAUGHAN,
Madison, Wis.

AFT On Campus welcomes letters to the editor. They can be sent to Editor, *AFT On Campus*, 555 New Jersey Ave. N.W., Washington, DC 20001, or e-mailed to edit@aftoncampus.org.

More about 'economic ecology'

BY DON KUEHN

IN MY LAST COLUMN, I coined the term "economic ecology"—how to make money, how to conserve it, how to grow it, and how and when to harvest it. This topic is too big to fully tackle here, so I'll spotlight some key points and urge you to go to the expanded online version (see box) to read more.

How to make it. It's not just about going to work and collecting a paycheck. It also means budgeting and controlling expenses, living below your means and making wise choices about spending. An old axiom puts it like this: "It's not how much you make that matters, it's how much you keep."

How to conserve it. There is a difference between saving and investing. You save in very low-risk accounts for short-term expenses. You invest to grow your assets over the long term.

Investing has some inherent risks. To cushion the effect of the swings in the market, di-

versify your assets so that some investments will be cycling up when others might be declining. Conservation also includes rebalancing your portfolio as market conditions or your personal situation changes. As you near retirement, that balance shifts toward more safety and less risk.

How to grow it. I am a strong advocate of no-load, low-cost mutual funds. A mutual fund is a basket of stocks or bonds. By selecting funds in various categories, over time you can build a portfolio that is diversified and balanced.

By late October 2012, the average stock mutual fund had gained 11.4 percent for the year and 124 percent from the "bottom" of the market plunge in 2009, according to Lipper Analytical Services. And the average general obligation U.S. bond fund is up 32 percent since September 2007.

How and when to harvest it. You should be able to withdraw 4 percent each year from a well-diversified portfolio without fear of running out of assets before you die. The problem is, 4 percent isn't very much money.

A recent study by pension consultant Aon

Hewitt revealed that the average defined-contribution account, like a 403(b) or 401(k), has a balance of \$74,380. While that may seem like a fair sum, at 4 percent it represents a withdrawal rate of less than \$3,000 per year.

Knowing when to harvest your retirement assets is a different issue. Americans have long held the notion that retirement is supposed to happen at age 65. But retirement can't be triggered by an arbitrary date or age. If you have a mortgage, car loans or credit card bills, you need to work that debt off before you retire, or you'll deplete your nest egg faster than you planned.

Whether you are nearing retirement or just beginning your career, it's incumbent on you to master your own "economic ecology." It's *your money*. Now is the time to get it together, so one day you can enjoy the kind of retirement you deserve.

Don Kuehn is a retired AFT senior national representative. For specific advice relative to your personal situation, consult competent legal, tax or financial counsel. Comments and questions can be sent to dkuehn60@yahoo.com.

For an expanded version of this article, go to:
www.aft.org/publications/your_money.



Answer Key to:

THE DISABILITY INCOME INSURANCE TEST:

Q#1: "What will happen to my income if I am disabled during my working years?"

True	False	
	✓	"I'm covered by my employer."
	✓	"I have enough sick days to see me through."
	✓	"Social Security will take care of me."
	✓	"My pension will take care of me."
	✓	"My family can go a long time without my paycheck."

Q#2: Which statements about the AFT Disability Income Insurance Program are correct?

True	False	
✓		"Protects up to 60% of my income for just a few dollars a week."
✓		"Provides coverage on and off the job."
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ANOTHER TECH BUBBLE? In his GeekWire column, Seattle tech consultant Frank Catalano worries that the boom in education technology has less to do with improving education and more to do with profits.

He points to an “overinterest” in digital learning by venture capitalists, citing this factoid from the news site *EdSurge*: “In 2011, we passed the last peak of edtech investment, which occurred during the memorable bubble of 1999.”

He also notes an uptick in the promotion of ed technology by those with a political agenda, i.e., former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, whose Foundation for Excellence in Education has digital learning as a core part of its “reform agenda.” Adding politics to the mix, Catalano writes, could mask or make divisive technology’s application and effectiveness in the classroom.

Could too much overhyped edtech “collapse into a black hole of failure?” he asks. “That’s a gravity well that could suck across its event horizon not just bad products, greedy investors and clueless entrepreneurs, but also the good of each group—with teachers and students dragged into the maelstrom.” That black hole, he notes, would absorb all learners, including the children of edtech entrepreneurs to come. (Hat tip to Hack [Higher] Education, *Inside Higher Ed*, Dec. 12, 2012)

UNFULFILLED EXPECTATIONS New data from the annual Campus Computing Survey by Kenneth C. Green show college presidents and chief information officers (CIOs) have mixed feelings about how well their institutions’ technology investments are paying off. For example, three-fifths of the CIOs view the institutional investment in IT for library resources and for administrative information systems to be “very effective,” and just over half (55.2 percent) cite the investment in IT for on-campus instruction as “very effective.” By comparison, a different survey Green conducted of campus CEOs shows just 39.0 percent of presidents and 33.4 percent of provosts view the IT investment to support library resources and administrative systems to be “very effective,” and just 42.1 percent of presidents and 50.0 percent of chief academic officers assess the IT investment to support on-campus instruction as “very effective.”

In other news, 60.2 percent of the campuses participating in this year’s survey have activated mobile apps as of fall 2012 or will do so in the coming academic year.

View the whole survey at bit.ly/UaV4pF.

The myth about online courses

Why the argument against faculty just won’t die



BY CYNTHIA EATON

YOU’VE HEARD the myth about online courses? A single faculty member, the story goes, cannot possibly develop and deliver an effective online course—not

alone—because online instruction “requires deliberate instructional design that hinges on linking learning objectives to specific learning activities and measurable outcomes,” and few faculty possess such expertise. Ouch.

The argument for “reconfiguring” the faculty role in higher ed was made more than 15 years ago regarding online courses, and the argument continues today regarding MOOCs, massive open online courses. Why won’t these arguments against faculty fade?

In 2003, the AFT *Technology Review*

dismantled the argument for dismantling the professoriate.

Tom Krieger argued that the mid-1990s movement to “disaggregate” or “unbundle” faculty roles in distance ed courses was a thinly disguised attack on faculty as professionals. Krieger wrote, “DE courses, the argument went, would reduce the need for faculty interaction, providing students with greater independence while facilitating their ability to work on collaborative projects with peers.” What are the touted benefits of MOOCs, free online courses by professors from elite universities enrolling tens of thousands of students? Reduced need for faculty interaction, reliance on greater student independence, and use of computer- and peer-grading systems. In other words, unbundle the expensive faculty role in educating students, and let technology and classmates fill in the blanks.

Just last year, president of Southern New Hampshire University Paul LeBlanc’s vision for “the next big thing” in online education was described in a *Chronicle of Higher Education* Wired Campus posting:

“The vision is that students could sign up for self-paced online programs with no conventional instructors. They could work at their own

speeds through engaging online content that offers built-in assessments, allowing them to determine when they are ready to move on. They could get help through networks of peers who are working in the same courses; online discussions could be monitored by subject experts. When they’re ready, students could complete a proctored assessment, perhaps at a local high school, or perhaps online. The university’s staff could then grade the assessment and assign credit.

“And the education could be far cheaper because there would be no expensive instructor.”

The latest myth-spinners argue that higher education needs the “disruptive potential” of MOOCs. While faculty express concerns about most MOOCs as “teacherless classrooms” and glorified technological “textbooks,” the American Council of Education has just opened the door by which students in these courses—which thus far have granted successful participants only a certificate of completion—might receive college credit.

This raises numerous questions, some of which ACE promises to explore, but the crux of the issue is this: While technological enhancements to education might scale up well to “massive,” education that is predicated upon genuine interaction with a highly trained and educated professional does not.

So it comes down to how we define education: Is it the *process* of teaching and learning between students and a more educated, more experienced professional? Or is it the *product* represented by a credential, a certificate of completion, a diploma?

It’s high time to bust these myths about online education and keep faculty voices central during this period of exploration with MOOCs.

Cynthia Eaton is associate professor of English at Suffolk County (N.Y.) Community College and a distance education mentor for her union, the Faculty Association of SCC. Send comments to her at cynthia@fascc.org.



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